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### NINTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION.

THE Board of Education respectfully submit to the Legislature this their **NINTH ANNUAL REPORT.**

In the discharge of a duty enjoined upon them by the statute, the Board have no new views to submit to the Legislature. Indeed, comparatively speaking, there is little of novelty in the whole subject of education. It depends, for the interest which it excites in the popular mind, rather upon its importance than upon its novelty ; and it may be questioned, whether the presentation of a variety of plans, by distracting the popular mind and diverting the public attention from the leading interests of the cause, may not be to it a source, rather of injury, than of advantage. Errors, of course, must be corrected when they shall have been discovered, and improvements at all times should be readily introduced ; but a system of education, well digested, and deliberately adopted, must depend, for its success, upon the progressive development of its fundamental principles. It will, in that case, invite to itself a careful examination ; discussion will throw light upon those principles, and experience will add its sanction to the conclusions of reason.

The cardinal principle, which lies at the foundation of our educational system, is, that all the children of the State shall be educated by the State. As our republican government was founded upon the virtue and intelligence of the people, it was rightly concluded by its framers, that, without a wise educational system, the government itself could not exist ; and in ordaining that the expense of educating the people should be defrayed by the people at large, without reference to the particular benefit of individuals, it was considered that those, who, perhaps without children of their own, nevertheless would still be compelled to pay a large tax, would receive an ample equivalent in the protection of their persons, and the security of their property.

The great duty, which is imposed upon the present genera-

tion, is to carry forward and perfect the system which those framers designed ; and the question for consideration among us, should be, as to the best mode of promoting the general dissemination of intelligence and virtue among the people.

It is obvious that many circumstances must concur, in the accomplishment of this object. It is not enough for this purpose, to appropriate a large amount of money ; for money has been, and will again be appropriated, without any answering results. It is not enough, that able and accomplished teachers should be provided ; for teachers will labor in their vocation, with a zeal, corresponding only with the feelings of parents and the expectations of the public ; and when those who should kindle their zeal, regard them with indifference, the efforts of the teachers will be paralyzed. It is not enough, that the heart of a parent may yearn for the intellectual and moral welfare of his child ; for, while so many other parents are disposed to postpone the education of their children, to the most ephemeral objects of pursuit, and while so many citizens regard the tax which is paid by them for the education of the people, as so much money wrung from them by an oppressive wrong, the effort of that parent will accomplish but little, in creating a high standard of intellectual attainment. Nor is it enough that a few philanthropic men should feel the force of the great truth, that nothing but our system of general education stands between us and a despotism ; for, though they may so feel, and may so act, and although the community may think with them, yet the result is apparently so remote, there are so many immediate and engrossing objects of pursuit, and an effort in this cause has so much the appearance of labor for another's welfare, that a speculative belief is not, necessarily, the parent of efficient action. It is evident that there must be a concurrence of these, and many other circumstances, before intellectual light can be let into the darkest recesses of the popular mind ; — before the government can proceed with its most beneficent action, or the people arrive at the highest realization of happiness.

The principal object to be kept steadily in view, in the promotion of the cause of popular education, is to impress upon the mind of the whole people a proper sense of its importance. The parent should consider it as the well-spring of happiness for his children ; and the citizen should regard it as the source of prosperity to the State. When the parent looks up to the highest offices of the country, and is dazzled with the honors, the emoluments, and the influences of official power ; when he contemplates those distinguished characters in the world's history, who rise from, and tower above the great mass of mankind, and almost hopelessly covets, for his offspring, the same life of illustrious virtue, let the words of encouragement be to him, — *Educate your children, and there is no honor, or office, to which they may not aspire !*

If, when feeling the distresses of poverty, he looks with envy upon the comforts of those who revel in the fancied enjoyments of wealth, — or if, when shut out from those intellectual pleasures which Knowledge opens to her votaries, he repines at the hard fate to which ignorance has consigned him, the reflection, that, by the *education of his children*, he is providing for the well-being of those, who are of him, and are to live after him, will be to him, at once, a solace in his distress, and a source of unalloyed enjoyment.

The citizen often complains of the enactment of unwise and unwholesome laws, and of the want of proper remedial measures for the protection of the interests of society. He alleges, and sometimes not without reason, that his rights have been sacrificed by the incapacity of a jury. The answer to him should be, — *Educate the people*. Jurors will then become virtuous and intelligent, and the conflicting rights of individuals will be adjudged according to the law and the evidence.

Smarting under the disappointment of a political defeat, he sometimes inveighs against the institutions of his country, and affects to doubt the capacity of man for the duties of self-government. Let the reply to this complaint be, — *Educate the people!* They can then perform their governmental duties according to the design of the framers of the Constitution, and improvement will succeed improvement, as the people progress in intelligence and virtue.

Fears are, at times, entertained by him, that the rapid influx of a foreign population, ignorant of our laws and hostile to our institutions, may debase our morals and overthrow our government. Law may, perhaps, delay, and even prevent such a catastrophe ; but, in the education of the people, a barrier is erected, against which the waves of foreign ignorance and vice may break and foam in vain.

Let views of this kind be so thoroughly impressed upon the popular mind, that men shall proceed to act upon a conviction of their truth, and we shall soon behold a change in the education of the rising generation. The people will then unite with interest, in the formation of the youthful character. The means of education will be increased, "books which are books" will be furnished, as food for the mind, the zeal of the teacher will be quickened by encouragement, his character will be elevated, and those persons who have hitherto stood aloof from this field of labor, will commence, with a new energy, in the work of usefulness.

A principal obstacle, which seems to stand in the way of the active coöperation of many a worthy citizen, in the improvement of our Common Schools, is the apparent inadequacy of the means to the end, arising from the time which must necessarily intervene between the application of the one and the accomplishment of the other. When an evil presses upon his

attention, he, naturally, looks to the means of immediate relief. His designs are rather remedial than preventive. His energies are expended upon a pressing necessity, and his attention is soon diverted from, perhaps, the greater, though distant calamities, which are sure to follow. When, for example, a popular tumult is excited, and the outbreak invades private right, or destroys private property, he calls for the enactment of sterner laws, or a more rigid enforcement of their penal provisions. He is anxious to punish the offender, with the view of deterring others from the commission of similar offences, by the example of his punishment. But he does not consider, that he has, thus far, advanced but a step in the path of duty. He does not reflect, that, though law may in some cases, by the fear of punishment, restrain the disposition for the commission of crime, it can in no case change the disposition itself. The tendencies to evil will still remain pent up in the breasts of the ignorant and the vicious, like the winds in the cave of Æolus, always ready, when opportunities shall present, "to rush forth, scattering dread and menacing destruction."

If he is told, that such aggressions can best be prevented by throwing more fully the light of education upon the minds of the people, and that these very aggressions should stimulate him to more active efforts in the instruction of the young, the field appears to him as too far distant. He can hardly conceive that the boy of to-day, is to be the man of to-morrow; and that the very aggressions which he now laments, may be, perhaps, the very incentive which will lead that boy to a life of crime.

How well has it been said, by a recent writer,

"Scratch the green rind of a sapling, or wantonly twist it in the soil,  
The scarred and crooked oak will tell of thee, for centuries to come!"

and it is equally true, that a single bad impression, imprinted upon the mind of a child, may determine, for evil, his future destiny. But the comparison ceases here. The deformities of the oak are limited to the tree itself, and do not extend to the other monarchs of the forest. But who can limit the propagation of that evil which one man may entail upon his own and succeeding generations?

But it is not merely against the occurrence of evil, that every citizen should strive. He, who, in the immunity of the present, becomes satisfied with aimless emotions, forgets alike what man has done, and what man was born to do. During the whole path of his pilgrimage, from its beginning to its end, the voice of duty calls him, continually, to toil; and he can only win and wear the moral honors of his being, by an unremitting progress.

In our own highly favored country, there is a peculiar duty devolving upon the people. Those, who, in a few years, are to control its destinies, are now in our Common Schools.

There, in the spring-time of their existence, they will acquire those habits which shall characterize their lives. Whatever there is, of excellence, in the Constitution which has been bequeathed to us; whatever there is, of value, in our laws, in the privileges of which we boast, in the honors which we prize, and in those institutions which have made our country "a name and a praise among all the people of the earth,"—all these depend for their existence, upon the education of those, who are so soon to stand forward, as actors, on the theatre of life; and, however long, in the other hemisphere, the arm of force may maintain the quiet of a despotism, yet, in this country, the fabric of our government can only be maintained by a progressive improvement of the people in knowledge and virtue.

The past year has afforded the most gratifying evidences of an increased attention by the people to the subject of Common School education, which has gradually won to itself the interest of the community; and that interest is destined to increase, with the deepened conviction of its importance.

The average attendance of the pupils has been increased; though, still, it is a lamentable fact that there are thousands of the children in our State, for whom the means of education have been provided, who still neglect to avail themselves of its advantages.

"Teachers' Institutes" have been held in four towns, in different parts of the Commonwealth, which have been attended by a large number of teachers, for the purposes of instruction. The Secretary of the Board, and one, or more, of its members, have been present, and the influences of the associations promise to be extremely favorable to the cause of education.

Highly interesting oral, and printed discussions, have been had, during the past year, in reference to modes of instruction, school-government, and discipline; and, though something of asperity has been manifested, yet truth has been elicited, and the cause of education has been advanced in the collision. It is to be regretted, that, in a cause, in which all the citizens of the State have so deep an interest, feelings of personal animosity should have been excited among any of those, who should labor together harmoniously in the accomplishment of a common object. It is to be regretted, also, that such frequent mis-statements should have been made, as to the views and recommendations of the Board, and of their Secretary, when an exact knowledge of those recommendations might so easily have been obtained, by a perusal of their recorded opinions. Indeed, much of the opposition of individuals, to each other, often arises from a mistaken belief of each other's opinions; and, in reference to the opinions, both of the Board, and of their Secretary, it is believed, that many, who have made those opinions the subjects of censure, will find that censure to have been

wasted, when they shall have ascertained what those opinions are.

The situation of the three State Normal Schools is, in a high degree, flourishing.

The school at Bridgewater, under the charge of Mr. Tillinghast, assisted by Mr. Greene, is, as the visitors report, conducted with much wisdom. It was apparent, at the examinations, that eminently successful efforts had been made to render the pupils thoroughly acquainted with all the branches, in which it will be their business to teach; and the promptness and precision of their answers were, in a high degree, gratifying.

Careful attention, evidently, had been paid to the morals and general deportment of the pupils; and the visitors were satisfied that the school is carrying out the beneficent design of its establishment.

The number of scholars, during the past term, has been eighty, viz., sixty males, and twenty females; and when the new edifice shall be completed, on, or before, the first day of July next, it is expected that the instruction of an increased number of pupils will add to the usefulness of the institution.

The Board are interested in learning the fact, that an annual convention of the Alumni of the institution is held in Bridgewater, for the purpose of promoting the cause of Education. More than two hundred of the pupils of the school have been present on these occasions; and, as scenes for the renewal of former acquaintance, for the imparting of lessons of experience, and as affording opportunity for the educational appeals and counsels of the distinguished friends of the cause, they are regarded as important auxiliaries in the work of education.

The school at Westfield is also reported by the visitors, as conferring great advantages upon those who are enjoying its privileges. It is, at present, under the charge of the Rev. Emerson Davis, assisted by the Rev. Perkins Clark.

The examinations of the school were highly satisfactory. No special, previous preparations had been made for them. No parts of the different studies were allotted to the pupils. They differed from an ordinary recitation, only in extending over all the studies which the pupils had been pursuing, during the term; thus affording a satisfactory opportunity of ascertaining the thoroughness of their instruction, and the accuracy of their knowledge.

At the present time, the school may be considered as increasing in numbers, as, it is believed, it is winning its way to public favor.

The Normal School, now at West Newton, continues to sustain that reputation for exact instruction and thorough discipline, which it owed, when at Lexington, to the successive exertions of its Principals, Messrs. Pierce and May.

The school was opened at West Newton for the reception of pupils in September, 1844, and the average number in attendance for three terms, has a little exceeded sixty-two. During the present term, now about to close, there have been sixty-eight pupils. The demands upon the Principal for Normal Teachers, have increased, and at the last spring and summer terms, Mr. Pierce had more applications than he could supply.

It will be recollected, that during the session of the Legislature, for the year 1845, a Memorial was presented by Charles Sumner, Esq., and others, as a Committee of the friends of Education, setting forth the utility of the system of Normal Schools, in the training and preparation of teachers, and the want of proper accommodations, at two of the three schools, in buildings, apparatus, and libraries. The memorial concluded, by urging upon the Legislature the appropriation of the sum of \$5000, to be placed at the disposal of the Board of Education, for those purposes, on condition that a further sum, of the same amount, to be obtained by contribution from the friends of the cause, should be placed at their disposal for the same object.

It will be remembered, also, to the honor of the enlightened liberality of that Legislature, that, in accordance with a unanimous recommendation of the Committee on Education, to which Committee it was referred, the prayer of the memorial was granted ; and the Governor, with the advice and consent of the Council, was authorized and requested to draw his warrant for the sum of \$5000, in favor of the Board, when the same sum should be placed at their disposal by the memorialists ; — the two sums to be appropriated by the Board, in providing suitable buildings for the State Normal Schools, and for purchasing apparatus, and libraries therefor.

A satisfactory assurance having been given, that the sum to be raised by the aid of the memorialists, in order to entitle the Board to the liberal appropriation of the Legislature, would be placed at their disposal, it became an important question, as to the towns in which the two schools should be permanently located. Upon this question, an amicable and an honorable contest took place between two towns, in the south-eastern, and two towns in the western parts of the Commonwealth ; and the very liberal offers, which were made to the Board, as a part of the sum of \$5000, before referred to, and also for the purposes of convenience and ornament in the vicinity of the school buildings, by the citizens of the towns of Bridgewater and Plymouth, and Northampton and Westfield, were cheering evidences of the kindly feeling of those citizens towards the cause of learning, and their high estimate of the value of these useful institutions.

In ultimately fixing upon Bridgewater as the location of one of the schools, and Westfield as the place for the other, the Board were governed by considerations which, in their opinion,

were decisive in favor of each of these towns. They are, each of them, central and easy of access. The prices of board are exceedingly low, and the inhabitants have manifested the highest interest in the success of the schools and the welfare of the pupils.

It may not be improper here, to mention the amount contributed by the two towns, in which the schools are permanently located.

In Westfield, the town, in its municipal capacity, appropriated the sum of five hundred dollars towards the before mentioned sum of \$5000, and the further sum of \$300, to be expended in constructing walks, and in raising and ornamenting the grounds in the vicinity of the site of the building. Individuals of that town subscribed six hundred dollars for the first of these objects, and a further sum a little exceeding six hundred dollars, for the second object.

A further sum of \$1500 was raised by School District No. 1, in that town, to be applied towards the erection of the edifice, on condition that a portion of it may be used as a model school-room for the instruction of the children of the district, to be connected with the Normal School, under the general superintendence of its Principal.

An eligible site has been purchased for the building, at a cost of five hundred dollars;—the owner of the land having remitted to the Board one half of the estimated value. Contracts have been made for the completion of the building, within the means placed at their disposal, and the building will be ready for occupancy early in the ensuing summer.

During the five years of the existence of the State Normal School at Bridgewater, the inhabitants of that town have manifested a warm interest in its success, and they have contributed liberally to its means. At the time when it was proposed to erect a building for its permanent accommodation, and, of course, to give a permanent location to the school, not only individual citizens, but the town in its corporate capacity, made liberal pecuniary offers to the Board, on condition that the school should not be removed. The question of location, both of the Bridgewater and Westfield schools, was eventually decided, with little or no reference to the pecuniary inducements held out by these respective towns, but on higher considerations of general policy and expediency. It is proper, however, to mention, that the rival towns of Plymouth and Northampton offered the sum of two thousand dollars each, as a *bonus* to the Board, on condition that the two schools, respectively, might be established within their limits.

The contracts for the erection of the Normal schoolhouse at Bridgewater are made, and the work is rapidly advancing.

The Report of the Secretary of the Board is herewith transmitted, and the attention of the Legislature is most respectfully

and earnestly solicited to the important subjects which it discusses.

The Annual Report of the Treasurer is hereto appended ; and the Board avail themselves of this opportunity to tender their thanks to the Treasurer, Mr. Mills, who, for eight years, has faithfully officiated as Treasurer of the Board without any pecuniary remuneration.

GEORGE N. BRIGGS,  
WILLIAM G. BATES,  
H. HUMPHREY,  
JOHN W. JAMES,

B. SEARS,  
E. H. CHAPIN,  
H. B. HOOKER.

Boston, Dec. 11, 1845.

NOTE.—The members of the Board whose names are not subscribed to this Report, were not present at the time of its adoption.

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NINTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SECRETARY OF THE BOARD  
OF EDUCATION.

TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION :

GENTLEMEN: The close of another year brings with it solemn contemplations, in regard to the state of Popular Education amongst us. A year of opportunities has passed, never to return ; and the question which arises in the conscientious mind is,—not whether we may not have made some progress, or even great progress,—but whether we have made all the progress which it was in our power to do. If all improvements which it was possible for us to make during this period, have not been made, the loss must be felt throughout an unending futurity. As each year and each day brings with it as much of duty as can possibly be performed, there is, in strictness, no reparation for the omissions or delinquencies of the past. We may, indeed, repent of errors committed, and mourn over time misspent ; and, in view of the error and the loss, we may fill up the future with a full measure of diligence and of duty ; but wrong once done, and time once wasted, must forever remain unalterable, irrevocable, indestructible facts. The *past* is unchangeable by any mortal power ; and, it is no irreverence to add, by immortal power also. The sentinel who sleeps at his post, and suffers the citadel to be taken, can never, by nights or years of subsequent watchfulness, *undo* the captivity his sluggishness has occasioned ; and the Christian, who lingers but for an hour in his ascending pathway, can never afterwards have reached, at the same time, the same height of excellence, to which he might otherwise have attained. This irrevocableness of neglected opportunities seems to have been ordained, by a wise Providence, to impress us with a deeper sense of the magnitude of our responsibilities, and of our culpableness for omitting to fulfil them ; while, on the other hand,

the future is graciously opened, where we may begin, though late, the work of reformation, and receive a proportionate reward.

In view of these truths, such questions as the following are forced upon the attention of every contemplative mind: Have we, during the last year, been faithful servants in carrying forward the greatest of all earthly instrumentalities for the advancement of mankind,—the education of the young? Have the errors and the abuses which still infest our noble system of Common Schools, been, as far as possible, rectified or extirpated? Have the great improvements which modern experience has brought to light, in regard to the modes of instructing and of training the young, been introduced, and has the widest practicable diffusion been given to them? Have all school officers and all teachers, each in his respective sphere, labored with all diligence and devotedness, and with a single eye to the welfare of the rising generation? Have the minds of the children been so enlightened and purified by the instructions they have received, and so strengthened by the exercises they have performed, that they will be better prepared than their fathers have been, to meet the great questions of social relationship and of national policy, so soon to be submitted to their decision? Has the moral nature of the young been so neglected that the groups of happy children now sporting around us, will, as so many of their fathers have done, go forth to depredate upon the property of the community, to embezzle private funds, to commit peculation upon public revenues, to become traitorous recipients of honorable trusts, to corrupt innocence, to fill the land with the woes of intemperance, to vilify sacred reputations, to destroy innocent lives, to crowd prisons and other receptacles of crime and infamy, and at last, after inflicting a life of curses upon a world they should have blessed, to lie down in a dishonored grave?—or, on the other hand, have the reason and conscience of these children been so successfully cultivated, that, when they come upon the stage of life, they will be able to shake off the gigantic evils which have fastened themselves upon society, and are impairing the value of all that makes life desirable? Have the educated,—those who fill the honorable seats of learning, and know by experience, the high and enduring satisfactions which knowledge can confer,—have they sought to diffuse among the less educated masses, that love of learning which will be necessary in order to save themselves from the Vandal attacks of Ignorance; and have the wealthy contributed that portion of their superfluous gains, to the spread of such useful information and sound principles, as alone can repel the incursions of agrarianism? In fine, is our State carrying forward the great work of Popular Education in a manner corresponding with the example bequeathed to her by her illustrious ancestors; and in

the manner which is due to those younger members of the American Union, which, year by year, are added to this great Republican family, and for whose welfare we are bound to care, by every consideration of private and of public interest? Alas! it is to be feared that none of these questions can be answered with an emphatic and unqualified affirmative. May the close of another year bring less occasion for regret than any of its predecessors have done.

A brief retrospect of the condition and progress of our schools during the past year, and an attempt to set before the Board one of the greatest deficiencies under which those schools are now suffering, will constitute the topics of my

#### NINTH ANNUAL REPORT.

During the last summer, the Honorable John Davis, of Boston,—late Judge of the Circuit Court,—made a present to the State Normal School at Bridgewater, of the London Encyclopædia. The following inscription is entered on one of the fly-leaves, at the beginning of the first volume:—

*Boston, July 21, 1845.*

This copy of the London Encyclopædia, (entire in twenty-two volumes,) is respectfully presented to the Massachusetts Board of Education, for the use of the State Normal School at Bridgewater;—*Splendeat us.*

JOHN DAVIS.

The work is found to be exceedingly valuable as one of reference, and it is much used by the pupils of the institution.

#### LIBRARIES.

The sum drawn from the treasury for the purchase of School District Libraries, from Dec. 1, 1844, to Dec. 1, 1845, was \$1470. As a greater proportion of the districts in the State are supplied with libraries, the annual drafts upon the treasury are becoming less.

The only towns in the State which have not availed themselves at all of the bounty offered by the State, for the establishment of School Libraries, are the following:—

BOSTON, in the County of Suffolk;

Burlington, Cambridge, Groton, Littleton and Medford, in the County of Middlesex;

Carver and Hull, in the County of Plymouth;

Rutland, in the County of Worcester;

Easthampton, Enfield and Prescott, in the County of Hampshire;

Holland, Monson, Tolland and Wales, in the County of Hampden;

Leyden and Wendell, in the County of Franklin;

New Ashford, Peru, Pittsfield and Windsor, in the County of Berkshire.

THE FOLLOWING TABLE EXHIBITS THE CONDITION OF THE MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOL FUND.

*Amount of Massachusetts School Fund at the end of each year since its establishment, and the Annual Interest on Cash and Stocks.*

Year.	Notes for Lands sold prior to 1837.	Notes for Lands sold since 1837.	Stocks and Notes of Banks, &c.	Cash deposited and bearing Interest.	Total.	Annual Interest on Stocks and Cash distributed among the Towns.
1835	144,070 06		281,000 00	89,836 68	514,906 74	16,331 39
1836	160,027 39		281,000 00	114,350 58	555,377 97	19,102 24
1837	149,463 94	2,000 00	281,000 00	129,212 35	561,676 29	20,040 77
1838	124,163 16	1,500 00	281,000 00	143,517 23	550,180 39	20,712 30
1839	115,384 78	18,885 46	381,000 00	58,592 20	573,862 44	20,806 86
1840	109,864 43	27,767 98	401,000 00	51,911 17	590,543 58	21,917 01
1841	73,888 58	19,688 45	455,450 00	17,759 17	566,791 20	23,347 19
1842	58,635 19	24,206 39	471,000 00	1,676 34	555,517 92	23,573 35
1843	45,763 73	44,150 32	471,000 00	2,781 58	563,695 63	24,370 78
1844	39,350 70	127,731 17	541,000 00	45,933 10	754,014 97	26,288 75
1845	*28,416 91	*110,492 28	608,043 00	42,437 36	789,389 55	28,966 85

It is well known that the greater part of this fund has been derived from the sale of Maine lands. The joint title of Massachusetts and Maine covers about six millions of acres of land lying within the limits of the last-named State. Half of this, by the Act of separation, belongs to the State of Massachusetts; and, by the Act of 1834, c. 169, one half of the moneys received from the sales of the part belonging to Massachusetts is to be added to the Common School Fund, until that fund shall amount to one million of dollars. By the above table, it will be perceived, that the fund on the 1st day of Dec. inst. was \$789,389 55, and that it is regularly increasing. According to the estimate of the Land Agent, the average value of the unsold lands may be set down, at the lowest, at fifty cents an acre. According to this estimate, the resources of the school fund, from this source, are not less than \$750,000.

TOWN APPROPRIATIONS.

The amount of money which the towns appropriated for the support of schools, and raised by self-imposed taxation, during the last school year, was	\$576,556 02
This sum exceeds the appropriation of the previous year, by more than <i>twenty-eight thousand dollars</i> .	
The value of board and fuel voluntarily contributed by the people for the purpose of prolonging the Common Schools, was . . . . .	36,338 02
The income of the Surplus Revenue, devoted by the towns to the same cause, was . . . . .	9,167 50
	<u><u>\$622,061 54</u></u>

\* The interest accruing on "Notes for Lands," is added to the principal, until the notes are paid. The interest on the *funded* capital only is distributed among the towns. For the year 1845, only the amount received up to the 1st of December is included.

This sum of \$622,061 54, was expended for teachers' wages and board, and for fuel for the schools, during the school year 1844-5. It is exclusive of a sum,—probably equal to \$150,000,—expended for building and repairing schoolhouses. It is also exclusive of all moneys expended for school libraries and apparatus, and of the cost of all text books and stationery. Doubtless the money expended for Common Schools during the last year, must have considerably exceeded one dollar apiece, for every man, woman and child in the State.

#### LENGTH OF SCHOOLS.

The length of the schools is gradually and uniformly increasing. Including the increase in the number of the schools, the aggregate of increase in the amount of schooling furnished to the children in 1844-5, as compared with the amount furnished in 1837, is 550 years; and the increase during the last year, as compared with the preceding, is more than 60 years. On an average, the length of the schools has increased a full month each. The regular increase in the number of what are called annual schools,—that is, schools kept through the year, excepting only the customary vacations,—is a fact very auspicious to the cause. By furnishing constant employment to a greater number of persons, it tends to elevate school keeping from an occasional occupation into a regular profession. This not only increases the number of professional teachers, but, by holding out the inducement of a permanent occupation, it encourages teachers to prepare themselves more thoroughly, before entering upon their work. In the present infantile and imperfect state of the art of teaching, it may safely be anticipated that every earnest and competent man or woman, who enters the profession, will contribute some new and valuable idea for the advancement of the cause.

#### ATTENDANCE.

Irregular attendance upon our schools has not ceased to be one of the greatest obstacles to their prosperity. It is true that, from year to year, there is a gradual mitigation of the evil, but the difficulty is of so stubborn and intractable a nature, and the reform is so slow, that, at the present rate of amelioration, it will require more than half a century to overcome it,—more than the period allotted to four entire generations of school children.

The whole number of children between the ages of 4 and 16, who belonged to the State, during the school year 1844-5, was . . . . .	194,984
But the whole number of children in the Public Schools, during <i>the summer</i> of the same year, was only . . . . .	149,189
	<hr/>
	45,795

Being 45,795 less than the whole number of children ; and the average attendance <i>in summer</i> of those who belonged to the school, was only . . . . .	106,941
Making a difference between the whole number in the State, between the above mentioned ages, and the average attendance on the school, <i>in summer</i> , of 88,043, which was equivalent to a constant absence of more than eight-nineteenths.	
The whole number belonging to the <i>winter</i> schools during the same year, was . . . . .	169,977

Showing that, at least, more than 25,000 of our children, between the above mentioned ages, were not in the Public Schools at all, during the winter season. The average attendance was only 125,259, which was equivalent to a constant absence of almost 70,000.

But there are two items, not embraced in the above statement, which go to increase its aggravation and enormity. Of the number belonging to the schools, 6,997 were under the age of 4 years ; and 11,572 were over the age of 16 years ; 18,569, therefore, were in attendance who were not between the ages of 4 and 16, and so the number of children between these ages who were either permanently or temporarily absent, is proportionally enlarged.

On the other hand, however, a portion of the children between the ages of 4 and 16, are educated wholly at academies or private schools ; and hence their absence from the Public Schools is no evidence that they are growing up without education. Supposing this latter number to be 12,000, it will then follow, (without making any allowance for those under 4 and over 16,) that more than three-eighteenths, (33,795,) of the children wholly dependent upon the Public Schools for an education, were not in those schools at all during the summer ; and that 13,007 were not in them at all during the winter. If this abandonment of the Public Schools, by thousands during the winter, and by tens of thousands during the summer, were all, the evil would be less appalling. But the whole truth adds new and formidable features to this delinquency. Many of those enrolled in the schools are but occasionally present ; and very few of them are uniformly so. The aggregate of the absences of those who belonged to the schools, was equivalent, *in summer*, to the permanent absence of 42,248 ; and, *in winter*, it was equivalent to the permanent absence of 44,738.

On the whole, therefore, of the entire number of children in the State, between the ages of 4 and 16, who are supposed to be wholly dependent upon the Public Schools for an education, the absences, either temporary or permanent, were equal to the permanent absence of 76,043 in summer, and to the permanent absence of 57,725 in winter ; — that is, the absences amount to

about seven and a half eighteenths in summer, and to about five and a half eighteenths, even in winter. Taking both summer and winter together, a number equal to considerably more than one-third of the whole number of children who look to our Common Schools alone for an education, may be considered as permanently absent from them.

Now, whatever amount of money it costs to maintain our schools, — and the sum expended last year was between \$800,000 and \$900,000, — more than one-third of that sum is lost by irregularity of attendance. It would be an under-estimate to rate this loss at \$300,000, for the last year; and the derangement of classes, the interruption of studies, and the consequent hinderance to progress, which the irregular scholars inflict upon the whole school, are such, that every experienced teacher will say, that, if only one-half of the children could be uniformly in school, it would be better than the present irregular attendance, though this attendance should be equal to two-thirds of their whole number. Every experienced teacher will affirm that, if the children of the State could be separated into two equal divisions, and one of these divisions would attend the schools regularly, during one year, and the other division, during the succeeding year, — each half being banished from school during the alternate years, — it would be better for the rising generation than it now is. Every experienced teacher will assert, that, if only one half the sum of money should be raised for the maintenance of schools, which we now raise, and all the children should attend school regularly while that money should be expended, such a course would promote the educational welfare of the State better than it is now promoted.

So far as the intelligence of the rising generation, and their ability to perform the various social and political duties of adult life, — which they will so soon perform, whether they have ability or not, — are dependent upon our Common Schools, one half of that intelligence and ability is sacrificed, is thrown away, by the prodigal and spendthrift manner in which we squander these unreturning opportunities. So far as our schools foster the interests of morality, and act as a restraint upon those formidable vices which are every where starting up around us, we forfeit, by our infatuated conduct upon this subject, one half the good that might be effected, and we double the fearful evils that must be suffered. Not only are the intelligence and moral condition of the State to be certainly and permanently degraded by this self-inflicted wrong, but the reputation of the Commonwealth, its dignity and honor and moral power, the force of its example upon other members of the Union, and its influence in shaping the destinies of our common country, are involved in a question which we treat with such amazing indifference. If our noble system of Common Schools is the boast of our own State, and the envy of others; if, (as is the case,) not a week passes, from one end of the year to the other, when we are

not called upon, by leading men of other States and countries, to give information respecting the organization, the administration, and the success of our schools; how much more persuasive would be our advice, how much more brilliant our example, were we not thus guilty of wasting the rich privileges we enjoy! Did we improve these privileges as we ought, then, though straitened in territory, and feeble in numbers, we might win a homage which the mightiest nations have failed to earn,—the unbought homage of contemporaries and posterity, for the varied blessings we had dispensed.

The distinctive and substantial difference between a republic and a despotism, consists in the sovereignty or the subjection of the people composing them. There may be the form and theory of an arbitrary government, while the nominal possessors of power feel constrained to yield continual deference to the popular voice. On the other hand, there may be a written constitution, and all the administrative forms of a free government, while a portion of the people are incapable of understanding a single one of all the momentous questions which are submitted to their decision,—a portion, therefore, as much governed by others, in all the votes they give, in all the dogmas they take up, and in all the party watchwords they shout, as the subjects of the sternest despotism are governed by their hereditary masters. The means of government may be different, but the abjectness and servility of the governed are as real in the one case, as in the other; and the factionist or demagogue who inflames or wheedles, is as irresponsible as the lord who commands. Now, in a republic, the number, or proportion, of this class, who never think for themselves, and who therefore always act at the dictation of others; and who, as a necessary consequence, fall, by force of their own gravitation, into the hands of selfish and profligate men,—this number may go on increasing from year to year, until they become a majority of the whole; or, at least, until, in all cases of emergency, they hold the balance of power, while the forms of the republic may remain unchanged,—nay, these very forms may be converted into a more efficient engine than ever before existed for wielding the selfish and irresponsible power which is the most execrable element in despotism itself. One after another, intelligent and conscientious men may drop out of the ranks, and their places be supplied by those whom ignorance and imbecility have prepared to become slaves, until, by a transition so gradual and stealthy, as to excite no alarm, the nominal republic may become an actual oligarchy,—a government of a select few,—not, however, the selected best, but the selected worst.

[To be continued.]

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